

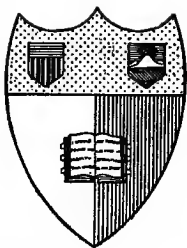
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LAND BREEZES



ARTHUR WILLIAM FISHER



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Land Breezes

BY
ARTHUR WILLIAM FISHER
Author of "Lake Breezes"



THE NEALE PUBLISHING COMPANY
440 FOURTH AVENUE, NEW YORK
MCMXVIII

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ARTHUR W. FISHER

**TO
THE MEMORY OF
MY SISTER NORA**

PREFACE

The present volume and its predecessor, "Lake Breezes," were written at about the same time; their sources of inspiration and their treatment are much the same; they may, therefore, be considered companion volumes.

In "Sammy's Stories" the speaker is the same venturesome, loquacious, little chap that appears in "Lake Breezes." He is a little white boy, who is just beginning to know the streets and fields. He speaks the language of his kind, neither knowing nor caring for good pronunciation or grammar. Indeed, he is quite unrestrained, and to invent some monstrosity of language is considered a feat worthy of attainment, while his irrepressible thoughts are constantly bubbling forth in this rather picturesque style.

In the "Double Red Cross Poems" in "Lake Breezes" there were drawn some faint and imperfect sketches of the ravages of alcohol, one of the great secondary causes of consumption; in the present volume other rough sketches are drawn of as great devastation wrought by corsets, another of the great secondary causes of this general scourge.

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ABRAHAM LINCOLN

WHILE faintly beamed the dawning West,
Within the shade of forest old,
Awoke a soul, our land's behest,
That fretted at a curse untold.

The clangs of slavery's fettered chains,
That rattled through the forest dim,
Were murmurs from the servile pains,
That struck reëchoing chords in him.

He heard them as a mother hears
The cry of pain from darling child,
And struggled through the awakening years
Of right and wrong ne'er reconciled.

At last, in gloom and fury born,
The storm swept wild across the land,
Till our loved nation, racked and torn,
Called for a firmer guiding hand.

He came, the spirit of the Free,
Resolved, through storm and strife and hate,
To hold on high our great Decree,
To save entire our Ship of State;

And more our Captain's purpose then,
If so the will of God might be,
To prove the equal rights of men,
To set the bounden blackmen free.

Through dreary years the fight wore on,
With dire dissension ever high,
Yet at the end our Chieftain won
For Union and for Liberty.

Scarce had the dove of peace appeared,
When one of foulest mind and brand,
From darkest villainy upreared,
And felled our Chief with crimson hand.

No gentler ruler ever swayed
A nation's awful destiny,
Or dealt to conquered foes arrayed
No malice but sweet charity.

A patriot in the grain was he,
Who fought the wrong, upheld the right;
The people's rule and liberty
He e'er defended with his might.

There, as he met the unholy cause,
With strife and slander at him hurled,
He stood, regardless of applause,
A beacon light to all the world.

Our nation's noble, martyred son;
His truest life to her was given;
'Mid all her honored names, Lincoln
Shines with the brightest stars in heaven.

Now as we view him from afar,
In passing onward through the night,
May we obey our guiding star,
Assail the wrong, advance the right.

MY COUNTRY'S CALL

My Country's call is ringing
Throughout the day and night;
To all our flag is bringing
The spirit of the fight,—
That e'en the smallest nation
May live in liberty:
Then lowly though my station,
My Flag is calling me.

Stern hatred of oppression
Provokes our free-born might,
When nation wills transgression
Of other nation's right;
And fills with savage slaughter
The highways of the sea;
And burdens wife and daughter
With yoke of tyranny.

Our President e'er peering
With vision keen and bright,
Descried the sly foe nearing
Our own land to ignite,
Sent forth the watchword waking
The Sons of Liberty:
"To arms! the world is making
Safe for Democracy!"

From ancient times and hoary
We've followed Freedom's light,

And battles fierce and gory
We've fought to stem the blight
Of tyrants' mad obsessions,—
They hold the world in fee,
And men and their possessions
Are theirs in slavery.

Now world wide war is raging,
Must every man his might
Bring to the final waging,
When freemen tyrants smite,
And end their desolation
That palls humanity:
Whatever be my station,
My Flag is calling me.

TRAMPLE TYRANNY

THE Stars and Stripes float o'er me;
They float above my home;
Their right and might are for me,
And to their call I'll come.

It is my country's banner
That waves so grandly there;
Its glorious folds and manner
Breathe freedom on the air.

It flies o'er land and ocean,
That Standard of the Free;
Its people's whole devotion
Is, *trample tyranny!*

Its laws are of the people,
Assembled in their might;
It owns no crown or steeple
In setting wrong from right.

It stands for justice ever,
Each man a freeman born;
And power and post shall never
Make citizen forlorn.

And if some "Lord's Anointed"
Shall spurn humanity,
Its warriors are appointed
To *trample tyranny!*

THE ROSE, THE LEAF AND THE THORN

"I AM better than you," said the rose to the
leaf,

As she tossed on the pure morning air,

"For my perfume is sweeter, my colors are chief
Of the daintiest bowers of the fair.

"In the bright, sunny morning my treasures are
sought

By the lover's fantastical sight,

Then deep into a nosegay I'm cunningly wrought
To enhance his sweet maiden's delight.

"Oh, yes, grander by far is my place in the
world;

When I see you despised and forlorn,

I must think of how idle in budlet you curled,
And how needless you ever were born."

Even while the proud rose her vain glories ex-
toll'd,

Her sweet perfume and colors decayed,

Until on the wild wind that her pleasures un-
roll'd,

Her rare fragrance and petals had strayed.

"Not far better are you," said the leaf in reply,

"For my company adds to your power,

And while for a moment your favor is high,

'Tis the favor that lasts but an hour."

“But I’m better than you,” said the leaf to the
thorn,
As she waved in disdainfullest mood,
“For my mission is kinder, on the breeze I am
born
To invite the sweet birds with a nod.

“They come at my call but a moment to stay,
For harsh is the bough and the twig,
While away from your presence they dart in dis-
may
To alight on some friendlier sprig.

“Though from enemies dire you protect the
green sprout
And protect us, ’tis true, all the year,
Yet our kindest friends, too, you e’er put to rout,
For your presence provokes but a tear.”

The vain leaf ever fluttered as the breeze whis-
pered low,
And she trembled at the thought of the sound
Of the strong winds in autumn, that about her
would blow,
And in gusts sweep her over the ground.

“My fair sisters of summer,” the thorn now re-
plied,
“Your sweet lives are quaking with fear;
Ere the chill of the north wind through autumn
has sighed,
Your lithe bodies are withered and sear.

“For a time you may flutter in vanity’s pride,
Like the flood of humanity gay,
But your life breath is short, you are soon cast
aside,
For your splendor can last but a day.

“In the lives of us all is a great purpose sealed,
And not better is one than the rest,
For we each to the other a service must yield,
And, thus serving, we make our lives blest.”

DANDELIONS

BRIGHT dandelions, standing in the grass,
And glancing upward to those realms of blue,
Like gleams of sunshine on a sea of dew,
Ye cheer earth's weary travelers as they pass.
What though your golden heads full humble lie?
Yours is no office low, despised, or mean;
Earth's stars are ye, resplendent in the green,
Reflected constellations of the sky;
And when I see how bright and fair ye be,
Your beauties spreading wide among mankind,
I needs must look unto yon astral sea,
And back to earth with more instructed mind;
And when again I look upon the sod,
Your hues reflect fair Nature and her God.

THE TOLL BRIDGE

IN sweet memory still lingers
Pictures, quaint and old,
That have shunned Time's gleaning fingers
As they stole
Through those scenes, with age grown fonder,
Where, by wood and wold
And the bridge, I oft would wander—
For a toll.

Balmy were those days and youthful,
In the years gone by,
When I thrilled with rapture truthful
Of the soul,
When my hopes and dreams were laden
With a longing sigh,
When I wooed an honest maiden,
Asking toll.

Shyly in the evening's gloaming
I would meet her where
Spans the bridge the streamlet foaming
From the knoll.
Oft I think of those chance meetings
Of the wistful pair,
And the lad's and lassie's greetings—
And the toll.

“Every stream is crossed according
As the water's high,—

Deep, by bridge, or, shallow, fording,
 Baring sole ;
Cross by toll-bridge, maiden, slender,
 Keep your ankles dry ;
What if farer to bridge-tender
 Pay a toll ? ”

“ Sir Bridge Tender, must one strolling
 Pay or cross by ford,
When the rushing river rolling
 Rounds the bowl ?
Can you wait until tomorrow ?
 You are harsh in word ;
I can't pay—unless I borrow—
 How much toll ? ”

Carefully the fare adjusting,
 Basking on the ridge
Of her favor, meekly trusting,
 I would loll,
For a moment's sweet delaying,
 On the narrow bridge
Ere I sought the dainty paying
 Of the toll,

When the fairest of fair givers
 Met encircling arms
Just above the flowing river's
 Rippling roll,
While my youthful heart was smitten
 With her graceful charms,

And my mind, in life-lines written,
Wears the toll.

Thus, with artless, fond caressing,
In the lingering breeze,
I, my ardent love expressing,
Won the goal;
Never could I think of missing,
'Neath the sheltering trees,
Coyly the sweet maiden kissing—
Paying toll.

With the glowing day's fast fading
And the waning light,
With the evening's silent shading
Of the stroll,
Came the welcome glow of vesper
Through the gathering night
And the lovers' lisping whisper—
And the toll.

Came too soon the lingering parting
And the tender kiss;
Came and went the happy starting
Of life's scroll;
Came and went, but memory never
That exalted bliss
From our youthful joys will sever—
Paying toll.

THE RAMBLER ROSE

SWEET rambler rose, that climbst the garden wall,
With wayward branches thickly o'er it spun,
And perfumed glories nodding in the sun,
Supported thus, thou fearst nor wind nor fall.
How like the love of woman when combined !
With clinging tendrils fastened all around,
It towers aloof, nor cleaves the lowly ground,
Its richest fragrance scattered unconfined.
As shines the clustered flowerets' gorgeous span,
While sweetest perfume everywhere pervades,
So shines the love of woman linked to man ;
And, nestling there, it neither wilts nor fades,
Its blessings blooming ever while life flows
To cheer the world, as thou, sweet rambler rose.

DRIFTING

SLOWLY drifting, drifting, drifting,
Like the vagrant sands that flow,
Are the hosts of men and women;
Constantly they come and go.

Like the racks that flit the heaven,
They are drifting on and on,
By the fitful four winds driven,
Hither, thither, and are gone.

Purposeless and seeming reckless,
As the beasts that roam the field,
Care they nought what needs tomorrow
If today their pleasure yield.

As the birds in airy passage
Dart their thoughtless will's intent,
Springs the impulse of man's action,
Strong and vivid till 'tis spent.

Thus for ages they have drifted;
Thus for ages they will yet,
In a transient, vague endeavor,
Till the sun of life is set.

ISADORE

IN a pleasant grove and shady,
Where the birds their sweetest tune,
Sang unto the little lady
All that balmy afternoon;
With his conscience on a nettle,
Did the roguish Benny Moore
Sidle all along the settle
To the side of Isadore.

How the squirrel, he told her shyly,
Nimbly gnaws the hickory nut;
And to show her deftly, slyly,
How the master makes the cut,
Slipt his arm around her quickly
(Oh, the naughty Benny Moore!)
And, with pulses beating thickly,
Stole a kiss from Isadore!

When his childhood days were over,
Benny found his love again,
As a timid, quiet rover,
Wandering down a lonely lane;
While he watched, the lovely maiden
Smote the heart of Benny Moore;
And his candid soul, love-laden,
Longed for gentle Isadore.

Was the thought of that sweet rover:
 "Would she be the happy lass?"
Then she saw a lucky clover,
 Stooped to pick it from the grass;
Oh, the thoughts of that young lover,
 Shy and honest Benny Moore,
When he saw the lucky clover
 Touch the lips of Isadore!

All the birds sang gaily, sweetly,
 As he sauntered by her side;
Yet they queried so discreetly,
 All the woodland had replied;
Softly whispered word was spoken
 For the love of Benny Moore;
And the lover saw its token
 In the eyes of Isadore.

Swiftly flew the fleeting summers,
 As he toiled o'er field and wold;
Gladly saw two little comers
 Safe within the family fold;
Sweet the merry play and prattle
 Of the little Benny Moore,
While he shared his men and cattle
 With his sister, Isadore.

Thus the days were filled with gladness;
 Love was long and fate was kind,
Till an hour of piercing sadness
 Soft came stealing on the wind;

Wept he long in grief oppressing,
Kind and faithful Benny Moore;
He had lost his treasured blessing,
Gentle, loving Isadore.

BUILDING A HOME

HE:

FAIR love, in the springtime the song-birds, re-
turning,
For mate and for nestlings their young hearts
are yearning,
And filling the woodland with new bursts of
song;
While the springtime of youth yet around us is
smiling,
And distant the summer of life is beguiling,
My love and my life unto thee would belong,
And in the fair fields would I build us a home;
Thou joy of my youth and my love, wilt thou
come?

SHE:

Oh, love, as the birds, in the sweetness of morn-
ing,
When flowers deck the earth with their fairest
adorning,
Have chosen and mated and built them a nest,
So I, in the prime of my woman's devotion,
Through joy and through pain and the world's
rough commotion,
Would follow the longings that lie in my
breast,
And where'er in earth's lap we may build us our
home,
There with thee, my beloved, with thee will I
come.

BOTH :

With brightness and flowers the glad earth is
teeming ;

The butterfly's dancing, the little brook dream-
ing,

Or laughing away as delights his gay heart ;
Yet, clear be the heavens or foul be the weather,
Our lives and our fortunes are bound firm to-
gether ;

And, if from our kindred we drift far apart,
And the ties of our youth we thus sunder, and
roam,

In our true heart of hearts we will build us a
home.

THE STORK

THE wise stork smiles ; with all his wiles
He knows how well 'tis done,
When from the top of chimney's cop
He drops a little one.

You pray him come, relieve your home,
His magic wings unfurl ;
A boy, mayhap, would suit your lap—
He's sure to bring a girl.

Or other prayer has wafted there
As token of your joy ;
With fancy's whirl, you wish a girl—
But no, he brings a boy.

You think him rough ; you've had enough ;
That sage bird only grins,
For on his score he marked you four ;
He comes again—with twins.

You like the show ; it pleases so
You want another pair ;
He scorns display ; knows better way,—
Sometime he'll see your heir.

Away he flies to southern skies,
And comes back year by year ;
Whence all his joys of girls and boys
He holds a secret dear.

A DAY IN AUTUMN

THE pale morn trembles with the light
Of the approaching day,
While lingering elfins of the night
Skip on the lake and play.

Around the low vault of the sky,
The ruddy bands aglow
Assail the wavelets dancing by,
And stain their crystal flow.

Swift o'er the hills dull, brown and sear,
The dazzling minions speed,
Nor stay to dry a trembling tear
Upon the still green mead.

The plaintive brook slow wanders on,
So sad and mournfully;
Its friends, the flowers and birds, are gone
To seek a fairer sky.

The rabbit with his patter tread,
That, where the briars grow,
Seeks half in fear his humble bed,
Breathes of the ermine snow.

The squirrel chatters as he sways
Upon a forest limb,
And plucks a nut and nicely weighs
Against a winter grim.

While, arched on his primeval swing,
He pares a brittle rind,
The trees their scarlet vestments fling,
And shudder in the wind.

A fretful rack of cloud, that's fanned
By the autumnal gale,
Flits sullen o'er the sunny land,
And darkens dim the dale;

But when the little pet is o'er,
And frown to brightness yields,
Indulgent nature smiles once more
In her abundant fields.

O golden autumn, with thy wealth
Of fruit and smiles to cheer,
Thou art the queen of rustic health,
The crowning of the year!

Again upon the sunset hills
The golden arrows ply,
As through the dusky clouds there thrills
The rubric of the sky.

RUSTLING LEAVES

THE dull sun is wand'ring
O'er the clouds sailing by,
As low in the heavens
He's encircling the sky.

The flowers are drooping;
They are nipped by the frost;
Their sweet breath of summer
Is translated, not lost.

The sear leaves are falling
In the forest and grove;
They whisper the tidings
Of their nature and love.

The winds have espoused them;
Their stark parents they leave
To sigh through the evening,
To bewail and to grieve.

In play of the eddy,
In the vale, o'er the lea,
Like sirens they murmur
The weird songs of the sea.

The billows are breaking
Both on sea and on land;
By rough winds the waters
And the leaf-scrolls are fanned.

As falling leaves flutter
And the snow-clouds appear,
Our lives are oft checkered
With the shadows of fear;

Yet, while the leaves rustle,
Through the gloom they may bring
We'll see but their token
Of the new leaves of spring.

THE GAME

THE game, the game!
We've won the game!
And that is all we're after;
So now till late
We'll celebrate
With shout and song and laughter!

The score? the score?
Why, four or more
We beat them in the ending;
In manly game,
Without a blame,
A victory from them rending!

We've won the game
And spreading fame!
Who now shall lord it o'er us?
Around the world
Our victory's hurled,
And honor bows before us!

Ho, ho! the game!
We've won the game!
And that's no idle prattle!
Our team's no fake;
Their hands we'll shake
Till all their bones do rattle!

Hurrah! hurrah!
Who cares a straw?
A merry crowd we're bringing;
With chum and mate
We'll celebrate,
Our team's just praises singing.

CHRISTMAS GREETINGS

To you I send my Christmas greeting
With many a wish for glad New Year;
E'en in our thought, 'tis sweet, the meeting
Of friends and kindred while we're here;

But sweeter still with clasping fingers
To feel and know each glowing heart,
To feel each presence while life lingers,
To know each better ere we part.

Come, let us, then, at this glad season
Gather around the festive board;
Let love and friendship be our reason
Till each the other's mind has stored.

Let merry children's voices mingle
While showing gifts with laughing fun;
Let all hearts at this Yuletide tingle,
Then will the New Year blither run.

LAKE BREEZES

SUNRISE ON THE LAKE

THE shadowy night swift flies;
The orient hood of skies
 O'erhangs the lake
With brightening golden bars,
While silently the stars
 The heavens forsake.

Spreading the low vault o'er,
From offing unto shore,
 The foreglow shines
On clouds and nodding seas,
On shore and cape and trees,
 In gilding lines.

Thou Proteus of our day,
Hast more of good to say
 Or ill shall fall,
Ere glows the zenith sun
Or his nadir course shall run,
 On changeful ball?

Now ruby tints o'erspread
The bournes of cloudy bed,
 That banks the sky,
And from the fleecy piles
Stray far fleet, rifted isles,
 Craggy and high.

There, stratus clouds hang low,
Displayed in tenuous row,
 With straits between;
And near and far above
Rare, feathery racks e'er rove
 Along the scene.

Here, bold and beetling brows
Jut from those banks of snows,
 Their bases plane;
And those of duller hue
Seem mounts against the blue,
 Of earth again.

And higher, in the breeze,
Are forms of land and seas,—
 Bank, beach and bight;
Cape, neck and mountain land;
Stream, lake and ocean grand—
 All bathed in light.

With brighter, brighter gleams
The roseate morning beams
 And shines and glows,
And tints of rainbow light
Fall on the enraptured sight;
 The sky o'erflows.

Awaking now from rest,
The lake heaves his great breast
 And shakes, till waves

Of grandure spread him o'er
From horizon to shore,
While Zephyr raves.

From wooded cape afar,
Its rocky base and bar
And border bays,
The stretching crane flies out
In languid, wheeling bout
To greet the rays.

Ah! from his wavy keeps
The sun as Neptune peeps,
Faber of time,
Still rising ever higher,
Blowzed, seething face of fire,
Awful, sublime!

His restless, burning brow
A cloud envelops now,
Now cast aside;
Yet higher, higher mounts
The monarch from his founts
Nor may abide.

Far on the morning air
The great sea-god's green hair
Floats flauntingly,
And mingles with the clouds,
And wraps them as with shrouds,
Or as the sea.

And there again is seen,
Close on the changeful green—
 Entrancing sight—
Broad webs of gold and red,
Or crimson in its stead,—
 A wondrous light!

And now I look again,
It seems as if a rain
 Of colors flowed;
Or, from the heaps of hues,—
Reds, yellows, greens and blues—
 It seems it snowed.

The mighty monarch glows,
Across his face there flows
 A flaming flood;
From cheek to jowl it sways,
From hair to beard it plays
 In racer's mood.

Now see! 'neath cloudy veil
A gilded disk, a trail,
 On heaving marge;
Seems like a satellite
Just rising from the night,
 Or golden barge.

And o'er the waters far
The mirrored path of car
 Flows gleaming bright;

From car to shore it streams,—
A myriad dancing beams,
A dazzling light.

From 'neath horizon's bend
Some rising sails now wend,
And mount the crest;
Sped by the morning breeze,
They scud along the seas
To view the test.

Across the race-course drawn,
Marking the pale of dawn,
Lies cordon cloud;
And by that line-cloud bright,
Resplendent in the light,
Flies seagull proud.

Judge of the contest he,
Bird of the rolling sea;
The course he clears;
Headlong the coursers spring!
Oh, hear their hoof-beats ring!
The crowd's wild cheers!

Scarce urged, the steeds fly on,
Nor till the goal is won
Will slacken pace;
They mount through cloudy veils;
They mount, though chariot wails,
To win the race!

WAVES

HARD blows the wind, and strews our northern
sky

With snowy banks of cloud,
Around whose bristling domes and turrets high
The whistling blast pipes loud.

I hear it in its vain attempts to make
Of conquered foe a slave;
I hear it howling fiercely o'er the lake
To fright the fleeing wave.

Blow on, wild wind, for thou canst soon o'ertake
The fugitives that roll;
And, ere their haughty crests in triumph break,
Fling out the vanquished scroll,

Roll on, ye waves, that lash the shores along
In might and majesty;
Roll on, and marshal all your seried throng,
From shore to shore that lie.

Far out upon your combing crests, ye waves,
I see a rising sail;
Though driven hard by the fierce storm that
raves,
She rides before the gale.

Her sloping deck, that weary sailors tread,
Rolls now aright again;

Once more by puffing sail she's homeward sped,
Nor heeds the rolling main.

Along these shores, ye waves, the redman stood,
And watched your rolling heights;
Or in his birch canoe, on calmer flood,
He sought his wild delights.

No more the redman hunts your pebbled shore,
Or seeks your crafty game;
No more his warhoops haunt you as before;
He leaves you but your name.

Ontario, roll on! and blow, ye winds!
And wrestle as of yore;
Show once again your kindred spirits' minds,
And roll from shore to shore!

Roll on! to happy hunting grounds alone
Your redman friends have gone;
Yet tell us of their feats, their battles won,
Roll on! roll on! roll on!

SEAGULLS

FAR o'er the dark waves rising,
Now swaying to and fro,
Now turning, dipping, sailing,
The wheeling seagulls go.

Yet farther and farther I see them
Against the mottled sky,
As busy they are hunting
With keen and piercing eye.

Now high in the west careening,
They turn them toward the sun;
I see their white breasts gleaming,
As they in splendor run.

Now over bay and harbor
Their lustrous wings appear,
While mates to mates are calling
In voices loud and clear.

And as they wheel and hover
Above the swaying tide,
They spy the darting fishes
That near the surface glide.

A swoop, a plunge, a striking
With beak of surest aim,
One rises from the water
With treasured finny game.

He darts away with cunning;
Pursuers he would flee;
With envious eyes they follow
Or landward or toward sea.

Loud scream forsaken comrades,
That scan the calmer flow;
As rising, dipping, soaring,
They sail a graceful bow.

And oh, as one draws nearer,
His deep, dark tips I see,
His eyes and white plumes gleaming,
That bird of majesty!

His mates with wings now folded,
In centuries dot the tide;
Their calls, anon resounding,
Reëcho far and wide.

And here and there some, restless,
Now take to air, now wave;
In playful mood they skipper,
Or preen them as they lave.

Or in their flight I watch them,
Or on the swinging sea;
And as they scan the waters
A wonder comes to me.

I wonder, when they are flying,
And watching the rocking flow,

And ever and ever screaming,
How far they see below.

See they, in silent waters,
As they sail the tide along,
The fish, that swim in its bosom,
The rocks that below them throng?

Do they with their keen vision,
When bright and clear is the sky,
See through the depths below them,
Where sunken vessels lie?

Can they see the wreck of the vessel,
That by wind and wave was tost,
And with all her sailors and cargo
Went down in the storm and was lost?

Ye may not see the schooner,
Ye birds of soaring wing,
But oh, before the tempest
A warning cry ye sing.

A herald are ye of the danger,
That lurks within the gale;
In flying or in screaming,
Ye warn the stretching sail.

Ye see the light waves tossing,
Ye hear the armèd wind,

And know how by its murmur
Dark sorrow lurks behind.

And when ye've heard its sighing,
And seen the dashing foam,
Ye're longing and ye're wailing
For your dear ocean home.

BOATING SONG

SAIL oh sail, away we go,
Skimming o'er the crystal flow,
Gliding while the pennant flies,
Plying 'neath the friendly skies,
Running while the breeze is free,
Sail oh sail, the life for me.

Cleaving now the gliding wave,
While the laughing waters lave,
Fleeing from the wimpling wind,
With a fickle wake behind,
Darting now to wind or lee,
Sail oh sail, the life for me.

Outward, where the billows rise,
Where the wheeling seagull cries,
Out into the white-cap spray,
Where it lends a sportive fray,
Out, far out, with mirth and glee,
Sail oh sail, the life for me.

Sail oh sail, the breezes veer,
Back toward the harbor steer,
Back to where the breakers roar,
Back unto the rocky shore,
Back until the port we see,
Sail oh sail, the life for me.

THE LAKE'S REVEL

THE night grew dark ; o'er all the lake
A mirrored stillness there had been,
When dancing ripples gathering fuller soon
Glittered and sparkled in the rising moon,
That still her wonted rounds would make
To fend the darkness from the sons of men.

The increasing wind veered twixt the west
And north, and still increasing blew,
Till swelling waves broke from the tranquil tide,
And reared their mighty crests afar and wide,
Proud-swelling with defiant breast,
And terror-striking every wandering crew.

Beaten about by gusty winds,
With bearings lost and fragment sails,
A cruising hulk, of stuff more old than new,
Drove o'er the waters, with a forlorn crew
Of man and boy, whose fearful minds
Lent furor to the billow-heaping gales.

Hard beat the wind ; hard drove the sea ;
All night upon the foaming deep
Floundered the Dolphin in the weltering waves ;
Scarce hoped the crew to 'scape their watery
graves,
Or know the shelter of a lee
Or favored bay, till dawn might o'er them
creep.

At last the rosy-tinted morn
Broke o'er the orgies of the sea,
And beamed upon the waters rolling high,
And, smiling, vainly tried to pacify;
While darkly o'er the sky were born
Foul, murky clouds, that veiled the revelry.

Then swiftly from a harbor flew,
Across the Dolphin's course away,
A life-boat, manned by sturdy company,
Far o'er the troubled waters of the sea,
Overhauled the hulk, its fearful crew,
And shoreward sought again her own fair
bay.

Fierce swept the wind across the sky,
And fierce and fiercer drove the sea,
As farther, louder its resounding roar,
Reëchoing, fought the sternly curbing shore;
While safe the life-boat glided by,
And shunned once more Poseidon's tyranny.

The seagulls shrieked their piercing cry;
The storm-wind whistled through the land;
And far, far out across the seething lake
The white-caps shook when wrathful Neptune
spake,
And bid to further revelry,
Nor heeded more the sailors on the strand.

SAILING THE "BONNY BOY"

SAIL, O Bonny Boy, sail!
What, if the weather be calm or a gale?
What, if we're drifting or dipping the rail?
May not the cares of life follow our trail!
Sail, O Bonny Boy, sail!

Sail, O Bonny Boy, sail!
Off on the rolling sea, tossing the spray,
Out in the waves at the close of the day;
Let the time linger, we'll live while we may!
Sail, O Bonny Boy, sail!

Sail, O Bonny Boy, sail!
Now in the trough and now high on the crest,
Rocked in the sea like a babe lulled to rest,
Locked in the arms on a fond mother's breast;
Sail, O Bonny Boy, sail!

Sail, O Bonny Boy, sail!
Hail to the skipper and hail to the crew,
Hail to the vessel and hail to the blue,
Hail to the world, for life's moments are few;
Sail, O Bonny Boy, sail!

Sail, O Bonny Boy, sail!
Back o'er the rolling waves, sailing before,
Back ere the heavens in night gather o'er,
Back from the swells of the sea to the shore;
Sail, O Bonny Boy, sail!

UPON THE BEACH

UPON the sinuous beach of sand,
That skirts Ontario's waters grand,
Hemmed deep by many a willow wand
 And locust sweet,
All through the languid summer day,
A crowd of happy children play
 In shore clothes meet.

As back and forth the breezes blow,
And crystal waters ebb and flow,
The merry wanderers constant go
 With dancing glee;
From marge to crest of sandy shore
Fair dames and toddlings dot it o'er
 Careless and free.

Full many a fort and castle made,
With circling wall and moat displayed,
To keep them from the invader's raid
 And sandmen's ire;
And by the lapping of the wave
A well is dug with spade or stave
 To quench a fire.

Soon off the shore appears a bark,
Its model ancient as the ark,
Full menacing the stern bulwark,
 That threatens their fort;
Bristling with deadly clothes-pin guns,

Her bold commander fearless runs
Abreast the port.

“Immediate surrender, sir,
The only terms I would prefer
To letting shot and shell thick whirl
Upon you down,”—
This is the answer, firm and stern,
The valiant captain would return
To castled town.

At other times they launch a ship,
With shingle sails, that will not rip,
Though oft she sees disastrous trip,
With beetles manned;
Of gold and diamonds is her load,
She gaily scuds to rocking road
Or foreign strand.

Sometimes beneath o’erhanging shade
A race is run ’twixt boy and maid
Or children or their elders staid
With trip and fall,
When down amid the flying sand
Their bulky bodies flat expand
In awkward sprawl.

They write their names in letters large,
Places and dates, upon the marge,
And give them to the waves in charge,
The tale to save;

They come again another day,
To find their names are washed away—
The fickle wave!

Again, the tots along the shore
Will wade and spatter more and more;
Or down into the sand they bore
With curling toes,
Until they reel with balance lost,
Backward upon the waves they're tost
With loud spelt wocs.

Their elders, clad in swimming gown,
With bare feet prancing up and down,
Now boldly leave the shore sand brown
For waters deep,
And there the artful lessons learn,—
To swim, to float, to dive, in turn,
And balance keep.

Ho! swimming and diving fun begins,
And spattered water spouts and spins;
It sharply strikes the glistening skins
With scream and shout;
Then from the battle's pouring flood
Some to the nearest shore will scud
In utter rout.

The pretty nymphs skim through the waves,
While yonder dive the risky knaves;

Thus back and forth the wild fun raves
 The livelong day ;
The weary sun droops slowly down
O'er bathers and the castled town
 And toddlings gay.

SAMMY'S STORIES

SWIMMIN'

W'EN de sun is jest a-scorchin',
An' de win' is out uv breaf,
An' de day gits hotter an' hotter,
An' de birds are stiller'n deaf;
Den de leaves curl up deir edges
From de water dat dey lack,
But de sweat jes' rolls in ribers
Down yer belly an' yer back.

You kin mop yer face an' fore'ead
Wid yer ole limp han'kerchief,
You kin blow an' fuss, an' fan you
Wid a wilted burdock leaf;
But dere's jes' one way uv coolin'
You, dat I kin understand,—
Strip yer clothes off in de bushes,
An' go swimmin' on de sand.

You kin hold up yer two fingers
To de fellers on de way,
Fer dey all knows well de meanin',
An' dey'll sneak or run away;
Dey don' need a lot o' coaxin'
W'en inbited by de gang;
Dey jes' hoops an' yells an' hollers,
An' goes swimmin' wid a bang.

Course, de shore is full uv childern
All a-playin' in de sand,

An' dere's lots uv men an' wimen
Sittin' funder up de land;
Dey are all a-lookin' at you
W'en you dive an' swim an' float,
An' dey t'ink you got a bladder
In you bigger dan a boat.

W'en you dive, yer head ducks under,
As you seen de divers do;
Only dis you mus' remember,
Dat yer body goes down too;
Grab yer nose an' keep yer eyes shut,
Swaller breaf to last a week,
Fill yer chest an' belly chuck full
An' de holler uv yer cheek;

Stretch one hand above yer head,—so,
Jump up like de bullfrogs do,
Turn a han'sum topsy-turvy,
An' you'll split de wave in two;
But if you are skeert an' daresen't
An' you're 'fraid yer head will break,
You will surely make a "flatter"
Wid a steamer's swell an' wake.

Sumtimes w'en dey're all a-lookin'
At de bathers, you kin leap,
Stick yer hand high up above you,
Hoop an' yell to 'em, "So deep!"
Den sink down into de water,
An' upon de bottom sit;

You kin almost allus fool 'em,
An' dey t'ink dat you got grit.

W'en you're swimmin', it's so easy
Jes' to show 'em how you can
Spread yer arms right out before you,
An' make strokes jes' like a man;
Wid one foot upon de bottom
An' de udder splashin' well,
You kin fool 'em jest as easy!
An' dey never once kin tell.

Sometimes you kin take a drift-log
Or a plank from off de beach,
An' kin straddle it an' paddle
W'en de bottom's out uv reach;
But you allus mus' remember
Not to let it t'row you down,
'Cause, you once roll off an' strangle,
Maybe you will nearly drown.

W'en you're floatin', too, it's risky
'Specially w'en a ripple's on,
'Cause w'en you kin jes' touch bottom
Waves roll in, an' den you're gone,
Fer dey cum w'en you don' 'spect 'em,
An' dey fill you t'rough de nose;
Makes you strangle wid de sousin',
An' you to de bottom goes.

Well, de trouf is, swimmin's risky
Fer de feller dat plays smart,
But 'e needn't be so dafty
If 'e wants to learn de art;
He kin take a life-preserber
Uv sum sort till 'e learns how
Ter make strokes an' keep 'is breathin',
Jes' like I am doin' now.

Swimmin's awful nice an' pleasant,
An' it's mighty fine to know,
'Specially w'en you git capsized,
Or git cought out in a blow,
An' de waves roll bigger 'n' bigger,
An' you t'ink dat you will drown,
Fer 't's a long ways to de bottom,
An' no stops a-goin' down.

Sumtimes it is mighty handy
W'en yer neighbor's in de "drink,"
An' 'e's splashin' 'bout like mischief,
An' is jest about to sink;
You kin jump right in an' grab 'im
By de collar or de hair,
Roll 'im on 'is back an' save 'im
'Most before 'e knows you're dere.

Dough you sumtimes kin be useful
To yer neighbor or yerself,
If you knows de art uv swimmin'
An' kin be a water elf;

Yet, I reckon, it's most pleasant,
An' it gives a feelin' grand
Jes' ter strip off on a swelterin'
Day, an' swim upon de sand.

DE FICKLE POLLIWOGS

W'EN de win' blows soft in springtime,
An' de flowers are bloomin' bright,
An' de birds are all a-singin',
An' de bullfrogs croak at night;
Den I likes ter go a-trampin'
'Long de banks uv creeks an' brooks,
An' ter watch de t'ings dat 'appen
'Mong de rushes in de nooks.

You kin learn a lot 'bout nature
If you likes ter keep about,
An' jes' watch how t'ings are growin'
From de little egg an' sprout;
So I've watched de frogs dis summer,
An' its jes' de strangest t'ing
How dey sleep in mud all winter
An' wake up in early spring.

Anyhow, I seen an old one
Lay her eggs 'mong water weeds;
Dey are soft an' look like jelly
An' no bigger much dan seeds.
'Most two weeks I watched 'em steady,
And at last dey turned one day
Into beings some like bull'eads,—
Polliwogs, dat swam away.

On de weeds dey hung like leeches,
Till some mossy gills grew out,

Den dey wiggled off like fishes,
An' in schools dey chased about;
Den deir gills grew smaller 'n' smaller,
Till dey shifted clear inside
Just as if to ape de fishes
W'en dey t'rough de waters glide.

By an' by a strange t'ing 'appened,
An' you don' know what I saw;
Near one's tail, upon 'is body,
'Peared a little hinder paw;
Den de udder came a-peepin';
An' de fore paws soon appeared;
W'en 'e swam 'is feet would paddle,
But 'is tail 'is course jes' steered.

What a curious lookin' creature
Is a fickle polliwog,
W'en 'e sets 'imself to t'inkin'
He will change into a frog!
On each side 'is paws are paddlin',
While 'is tail flops out behind;
Whether 'e is fish or bullfrog,
He can't quite make up 'is mind.

Soon dat tail gits smaller 'n' smaller,
And at last it drops clean off;
Leaves a raw place dere to sit on,
But I guess a bullfrog's tough;
He kin sit upon a sore spot,
An' be happy all day long;

An' as soon as dat gits covered
He will sing 'is springtime song.

Polliwogs are awful fickle;
Dey are changin' all de time;
Dey don' like de clear, cool water,
Dey don' like de slippery slime;
I suspec' dey'll keep on changin',
Sproutin' legs an' droppin' tails;
W'en I see dem next time, maybe,
Dey'll be changed clean into whales!

TRAININ' MY BILLY GOAT

You aught ter see my billy goat;
He's jest as slick, by gee,
As any goat you ever seen,
Er ever 'spec' ter see;
He knows most everyt'ing I know,
An' sum t'ings dat I don't,
For every time I say, "You will,"
He blats out, "Well, I won't."

His hair is nice an' soft an' long,
'Cept on his hoofs an' head;
Feels like an airy cushion, most;
But dere it feels like lead,
Especially w'en 'e's rearin' round,
An' strikes you wid dat hair,
An' makes yer hinder feel jes' like
A cushion widout air.

Now, w'en I try to grab 'is beard,
To make 'im do my will,
He dodges quick de udder way,
An' blats back, "Not fur Bill."
He's quite a handy chap, you see,
A-readin' uv my mind,
Fur 'e kin tell most every time
W'en sumt'ing's in de wind.

He's stubborn as a full-blown mule,
An' stouter dan a bull;

Fur w'en I pulls upon 'is rope,
He sets an' lets me pull;
An' den we have a tug uv war,
Dat I most allus wins,
Fur, quick as s'cat, he'll quit 'is hold,
An' butt me on de shins.

I haven't tamed 'im quite as well
As I intend, sum day;
He still rears on 'is hinder legs
In a threat'nin' kind o' way;
An' w'en dese buttin' spells cums on
He's not in learnin' mood;
He'll whisk 'is tail an' blat about
Not wantin' to "be good."

His horns are awful hard, you bet,
An' bent to suit 'is wants,
For every time 'e drops 'is head
Dey lands right on my pants;
He's goat clean t'rough, inside an' out,—
Horns, beard, an' stumpy tail;
He'll blat, an' shake 'is batterin' ram,
An' den at me 'e'll sail.

He has de queerest appetite;
Most anyt'ing 'e'll chew,—
His tedder rope, a pasteboard box,
My shirt an' stockin', too;
But most 'e likes ma's garden patch
Wid dat nice lettice bed;

For 'e don't 'member lickin's well
Nor half de t'ings she's said.

He'll sneak into dat garden patch,
Or chew my clo'es, by gee;
Den, wid a look so inercent,
He'll lay it all on me;
Ma has her doubts which one is worst;
So dere I am again;
But 'cause I 'member better'n Bill
I'll stake 'im wid a chain.

Sumtimes I try to harness 'im,
An' hitch 'im to 'is cart;
But w'en I git 'im partly hitched,
He's sure to play up smart,
An' git me tangled in de straps,
An butt me good an' sound,
An' by de time 'e's done wid me
I'm harnessed on de ground.

I yells ter git my ma ter help
Me hitch 'im to dat cart;
'Cause den 'e acts most awful good—
Till I am 'bout to start;
Now 'e runs dis way, now runs dat,
Or p'r'aps 'e turns about,
Or runs upon a stone or stump
Until 'e dumps me out.

Sumtimes I race 'im on de road;
I t'ink I'll show dem how;
Yet w'en I git 'im under way,
He wouldn't beat a cow;
But w'en 'e runs away wid me
He takes an awful clip,
An' den I t'ink I'll haul 'im down,
But allus gets de slip.

W'en I unhitch 'im from dat cart,
An' strip 'is harness, too,
He's not so slow ter show me den
Jest how much 'e can do;
I tells 'im den, "No feed you'll get,
You've been so bad, unkind";
But w'en 'e starts dat batterin' ram,
I quickly change my mind;

An' w'en I takes 'im to de lot
Ter stake 'im wid 'is chain,
He's never tired a bit, by jinks,
He'd beat a railroad train;
An' if I try ter slow 'im up,
To gain my breaf an' feet,
He jes' lights out ter beat de wind,
An' drags me on my seat.

But I am growin' awful fast;
I'll teach dat billy goat
Dat w'en I calls 'im, it don't mean
Ter butt me 'neath my coat;

Still, trainin' goats is rather slow,
As anyone can see;
An' den at times I almost t'ink
Dat Bill is trainin' me.

DOUBLE RED CROSS POEMS

THE DOUBLE RED CROSS

OH, the Double Red Cross shines out from afar;
'Tis a symbol of light, 'tis a symbol of war;
And the tubercle germ in its fastness must fear
When that bright, flaming standard destruction
 brings near.

All the world has enlisted beneath that bright
 sign
To expel the fell foeman from your home and
 mine;
And we, too, in meet ardor must join in the
 strife,
Or for us the arch tyrant will ever be rife.

We must conquer his villains, those enemies dire,
That forever are setting our soul homes afire;
We must keep our flesh fortress in God's given
 mold,
Or will the stern tyrant soon enter our fold.

Then away with these girdles of torture and
 pain;
Let the lungs freely swell in their rightful do-
 main;
Let the blood and air mingle from ceiling to
 floor,
Till the fabric revived stands a stronghold once
 more.

Dread King Alcohol's forces are allies afield
Of the tyrant that stealthily weakens our shield;
And he, too, must be vanquished, his forces back
hurled
Ere the blest light of freedom may enter the
world.

In poverty's squalor, with air foul defiled,
The enemy forces the fort of the child;
And enchains him a captive at earliest breath,
Released only from torture by merciful death.

Then up with the standard, and down with the
foe;
This scourge of the nations forever must go;
And in place of disease and weak misery wan
Shall reign health in the sturdy and glad race of
man.

THE WAIL OF THE LOST

"Suffering breeds wisdom."

—WILLIAM LLOYD GARRISON, JR.

A WOMAN gray at noon of life
And pale and gaunt and worn,
Still walked a dupe of dress and strife
Begun ere she was born.

The ages' curse had dragged her low,
And racked her tortured frame;
Her mangled form in agony now
Still fed the raging flame.

Though passing years and trials dire
Had taught maturer mind,
This slave of fashion's pride and fire
Threw reason to the wind.

Yet listen must the aching form,
The frame that's wrenched and tried,
When reason's voice bursts through the storm,
And will not be belied.

That voice, that now as thunder rolled,
Reëchoed through her mind,
And all its legion warnings old
Came trooping up behind;

Some just reflections on the age,
Some where her kindred failed,

But more upon her folly's wage,
Till thus the woman wailed:

“A line of forebears past and gone,
That strewed with wrecks life's sea,
Have hoarded tortures one by one,
And left them all to me.

“Their crippled bodies' scathing scars,
That mother's corse eke bore,
Came on to me with many mars,
That were not there before.

“For weak nutrition's blighting spells,
That trickled through their veins,
Augmented by the stifled cells
Of lungs and brawn and brains,

“From me my native store had sapped
Of needed strength and vim,
Till, ere my fathered life was lapped,
My sealèd fate was grim.

“E'en in the womb nor torture ceased
Nor pressure's throttling grip,
Till pallid life blood's flow decreased
To scarce a withering drip.

“Tight was I held imprisoned there
Within that bony wall;

Nor could I grow in Nature's care,
And swell the ampler hall.

“Thus pent up in my prison case,
Development was vain,
Nor could all later years efface
The blight of that tense strain.

“So come our injuries ere birth
To health of mind and frame,
To plague us all our way on earth,
And leave a trail of blame.

“Oh, is it human, is it kind
To treat our offspring so?
Could e'en the cruellest savage mind
Inflict more cruel woe?

“Could Flathead Indian's mangling plate
Bound on her new-born's head,
Cause a more fiercely stunting state,
Or maim him more till dead?

“The mother's own enfeebled walls
Must greater suffering bear,
To expel the child from out its halls
Into this world of care.

“And still more anguish she must feel,
For from the stress and strain
On weakened tissues, slow to heal,
Comes the avenging pain.

“This is not as by Nature planned
Her noblest work to do;
But when we trouble her command,
Our wage is trouble, too.

“Not tranquil is the sea of life,
When once we're on its waves,
Nor hallowed is the eternal strife,
That makes us fashion's slaves.

“We follow blindly in the wake
Of those that pass before,
And measure not the cost we take,
That their transgressions bore;

“And blindly on the budding girl
The girdling lace is bound;
Her brain reels in a dizzy whirl;
She sinks upon the ground.

“Her lovely body's floating lines
Are crumpled, cramped and crushed
Into the corset's strict confines,
And Nature's cries are hushed.

“Internal organs, one and all,
Distorted from their place,
Are bound in serfdom and the thrall
Of relentless Tyrant Lace.

“The functions of these master parts,
Perverted thus by stealth,
Are ruined in the highest arts,
That make for body health.

“Thus all the health of future years
And all the functions nice
Are mangled into tags and tears
By Inquisition’s vice.

“Oh, are we Christian thus to bind
And nail upon a cross
The tender lives of our own kind,
And not e’en count their loss?

“The heathen will not thus insult;
Nor scarce the savage wild,
Oppressed by superstitious cult,
Will immolate her child.

“In younger years I, too, was blind
And deaf to Nature’s law;
I cultured zealously my mind,
And saw not any flaw.

“Aye, lore of letters, that I learned
In those much vaunted schools,
But lore of body, that I spurned,
And rated as a fool’s.

“I’ve practised young and old that lore,
And in my vain attempt
The laws of body to ignore
And hold myself exempt,

“I’ve paid long suffering as the price
Of Nature’s broken rule,
And made of health a sacrifice
To frowardness at school.

“Not I alone have met the cost
Of this perversity;
My children, too, have each been lost
Within this raging sea.

“I’ve wrecked their lives as mine was wrecked
In childhood’s days before;
I saw not how the sea was flecked
With wrecks of millions more.

“I saw not till too late the dross
That floats upon the brine;
I knew not till too late my loss—
What agony was mine!

“I racked my body till its form,
Well weakened with the sin,
Became a field of battle storm
For germs that lodged within.

“ ’Twas thus consumption gained its hold,
And slowly worked its way;
And thus it swept my falling fold
In undisputed sway;

“ Thus allied germs ranged o’er the field,
And fire-tongues leaping swelled
Against the fortress’ weakened shield,
And never could be quelled.

“ I’ve lost my darlings, one and all,
To pride’s infernal rage;
And pale consumption’s withering pall
Has come at every age.

“ I, too, am lost in its fell swoop;
That recks me little now;
The sacrifice of my little group
Is burned upon my brow.

“ My neighbors I have led afield,
Not by my conscious will;
Their minds unwarily did yield;
‘ I am their keeper,’ still.

“ I’ve drained to dregs the brimming cup
Of life’s most bitter wine;
I fed the fires that licked us up;
Now ashes meet are mine!

“Oh, would our mothers but ignore
The prick and press of pride,
And to their children quick restore
Those truths they keep aside;

“Would daughters in their growing years
Keep fresh their vigor prime,
And preen their body’s health till nears
Their own sweet nesting time;

“Would fathers teach those healthful arts,
That youthful minds should know,—
Due care for all our body’s parts,
With wills to keep them so;

“Would sons expect of sisters dear,
Of sweethearts and of wives
Not showy forms, that blanch and sear,
But natural, healthy lives;

“Would all throw off this blasting yoke,
And take a solemn vow
To wipe this curse with one grand stroke,
Its root and stem and bough,

“The darkest ills, that plague the earth,
With fell consumption’s rage,
Would leave no mark to mar our birth,
No scar to fret our age.”

THE SWIMMING GIRL

ONCE more I'm free from woman's bane,
Free from the cramp and stress and strain,
Free from the nervous rack and pain,
 That drives me wild;
Free from the woes of fashion's ban,
Free, now, to breathe as boy or man
 Or healthy child.

Once more my lungs leap to their fill,
Once more the blessed airs instill,
Once more my veins and arteries thrill
 In wildest glee;
And every gland and organ moves
In wonted sympathy that proves
 I'm free, I'm free!

Well may my waking spirit crave
To plunge again into the wave,
And let the encircling waters lave,
 Clear every pore;
While in that sturdy exercise
My every muscle leaps and cries:
 "I'm free once more!"

Here may I run and jump and swim,
Here through the limpid waters skim,
Here fill me full of life and vim,
 And natural be;
Here may I spurn conventional dress,

Here may I laugh without distress;
I'm free, I'm free!

Could woman, as the pristine race,
Be wholly free from torturing lace,
How lovely in her natural grace

Would she appear!

Then would the function of her life
Be added to the charms of wife

Without a fear.

But while such bonds enslave our sex
Well may the nobler questions vex—
Maid's, wife's and mother's, all complex—

No help I see

Until our thralldom we shall spurn,
And from our mother Nature learn:

“Be free, be free!”

SONGS OF LABOR

THE FISHERMAN'S DREAM

A FISHERMAN brown, who braved the seas,
That beat Ontario's shore,
Sat in his cabin in quiet ease,
Lulled by the breakers' roar.

The good wife sped her wonted toil,
As the evening spread she laid;
The lone lamp lighted dim the coil
Of line and net he made.

The kitten purred and arched her back
Against her master's limb;
The dog, that followed e'er his track,
Sniffed as he peered at him.

The driftwood crackled at the hearth,
The kettle puffed its steam;
The fisherman nodded back and forth,
As he dreamed aloud his dream:

"A few more like this morning's catch,
And the blustering winds may blow;
A larger number or finer batch
Ne'er came from the waters below.

"Then I'll quit the fretful waves and the boats,
And quit the changeful tide;
I'll sell my nets and bobbing floats
And all my tackle beside.

“I’ll build me a house o’erlooking the beach
With a garden and flowers to cheer;
And chickens and ducks, a plenty of each,
Shall bring me returns through the year.

“There with my wife I will nestle and thrive
Till the dim light of evening shall come; .
There ’mid such comforts contented we’ll live
Till the trumpet shall summon us home.”

The fisherman, roused from his happy dream
To the evening spread laid by,
Smiled as he thought how the real might seem
With the dreamed of treasures nigh.

To his wife he told the story again,
But she only smiled as before;
And at evening’s close on his cot he was lain
To dream his dream once more.

THE FISHERMAN'S LUCK

ERE morning dawned the fisherman's sail,
Puffed with the dingy breeze,
Flitted past shoal on increasing gale
To the water of open seas.

On, on it flew across the waves,
The signal buoy to find,
That bobbed o'er the spot, in watery caves,
Where the nets were anchored and lined.

There, in the swaying depths and the dark,
The fisherman's fancy could see
A boatload of fish, that o'ertopped the mark,
As in dream he knew it would be.

Again the bright picture enkindled his eye,
Of the home o'erlooking the beach,
With its fowls and its flowers, and his wife sitting by
And watchfully caring for each.

Absorbed in his vision his landmarks he lost;
His buoy submerged by the drift,
He wandered and hunted and aimlessly tost
Till the nets seemed not there to lift.

At length, in returning his bearings he gained;
The buoy shot up from the tide;

With the sight of the signal, despairing gloom
waned,
And vainly his joy would he hide.

His hands burning with haste, he lifted the float,
And with it the nets that it bound;
But few were the fish straggled into the boat;
They had shifted their feeding ground.

Crestfallen and limp he turned him to go;
The morning breeze had veered;
The buffeting winds were rolling the flow;
To the harbor's port he steered.

O'er the shore, on the hillside there gleamed the
bright spot,
Where his cottage should stand one day;
But a plan unfulfilled seemed ever his lot,
While his life-stream was ebbing away.

His dream fled before him on gossamer sail,
His hopes their colors had struck,
As the cry of his craft broke forth in the wail,
"Oh, this is fisherman's luck!"

THE RED EAR OF CORN

ALONE amid the falling shade
Of life's gray autumn closing round,
An old man sat, and, husking, made
The corn's ripe ears resound;
His wrinkled face and dimming eye
Told of the tale of years flown by;
His wealth of whitened hair
Fell o'er his ears so gracefully
An elf had placed it there.

His kindly face his snowy beard
Begirt, as clouds the mountain-top,
While 'neath his broad-brimmed straw he peered,
Nor wiped the glistening drop;
His loosened garb and brawny arm,
Symbolic of the life of farm,
Spoke grandly, full and strong
Of nature's worth that fears no harm,
Nor harbors aught of wrong.

The drooping sun swung low in the sky;
Its gilding fell on the husker lorn;
The old man paused and heaved a sigh
At a bright red ear of corn;
His mind flew back o'er vanished years,
To youth and sunshine, void of tears,
To jolly husking bee,
When kisses brewed on the corn's red ears
'Mid frolic's storm of glee.

He thought he heard in that olden time
The voice of one to him most dear,
And saw the twinkle and smile sublime
As he stripped the blushing ear;
The joyful laughter burst aloud,
A shout went up from the merry crowd
When he sought the bashful kiss;
His suit was long, his triumph proud
In the final moment of bliss.

Oh, often a kiss in privilege paid
'Mid blushes, squirms and jubilee;
Not few the plights 'twixt man and maid
At that blithe husking bee.
Many a year has passed since then,
And wide the gaps in maids and men,
The wide world whirling on;
Many have passed beyond our ken,
And few remain alone.

His joy was full with happy bride,
And bright the children by their door;
How lovely was she then by his side,
More lovely than before!
Together they traveled from that day,
'Mid smiles and tears, 'mid dull and gay,
More years than double score;
Ne'er were they parted by the way
Till parted at life's shore.

Full oft since then the old man dreamed
Of his blessed partner in the sky;

And oft the way much harder seemed—
A tear slipped from his eye.
The sinking sun glowed red and dull;
The rustling corn leaves mute and lull;
The red ear still in his hand,
The husker's heart was over full,
Thinking of that distant land.

THE HAY MAKERS

OFTEN in the morning early,
When the brightly glowing sun
Glistens on the dew drops pearly,
Is the mower's work begun.

When the meadow lark, swift springing,
Echoes to the matin call
Through the farm-yard shrilly ringing,
Scans the team the hill and fall.

Round and round the graceful bowing
Of the sprightly moving pair
Seems a token of their knowing
'Tis their winter's toothsome fare.

And a breeze from out the morning,
Sweeping by them as they pass,
Waving their sleek necks' adorning,
Sways the heaving sea of grass.

And the brook's slow, sleepy murmur
Trickles o'er its pebble stones,
Rumbles ever yet infirmer
In its drowsy undertones;

But its banks of verdant setting
Feel nowhere the humming blade,
Though the birds and flowers, coquetting,
Tremble in its mossy shade.

Far above their mates are winging,
Thrilling with their flood of song,
Making glad with endless singing
All that here to earth belong.

With the rake and tedder plying,
Swinging o'er the stubbled knolls,
Quickly is the sweet hay drying,
Ere the distant thunder rolls.

Soon the morning breeze, still blowing,
Whispering low and soft and still,
O'er the meadow gently flowing,
Sears the grass on plain and hill.

While the later sun is glossing
That expanse of meadow land,
Eager hands the hay are tossing
Into cocks that thickly stand.

From the cocks of scented clover
Shout and laugh of girl and boy,
Mingled with the bark of Rover,
Tell a tale of rustic joy;

But the distant wagon's rumbling
Drowns the children's merry play,
As with laughter they are tumbling
In the golden piles of hay;

And the dog's loud, joyous barking
Mingles with the happy fun

Of the children's hay-time larking,
Joins the race they often run

Down the hill, through hay and stubble,
Falling on their rugged road,
Up, with ne'er a sign of trouble,
For a ride upon the load.

Oh, the mirthful fun of swaying
On the load that rocks to sleep,
Or of sprites and fairies playing
In the hay so soft and deep!

How they listen tense with wonder
To some oft-repeated yarn,
Till they duck their heads low under
Laden beams athwart the barn!

How they romp in endless packing
Of the hay into the mow;
How in fun they help in stacking
Till the sweat stands on their brow!

Again, in the big hay-wagon,
With its rattling jar and jolt,
Taking the gray water flagon,
Back into the field they bolt.

Thus they toil until the even,
In their strangely wild delight;
Till the calm glow of the heaven
Heralds in the peaceful night.

EVENING

THE day is done,
And rest is won,
The evening and repose;
Homeward the toiler goes;
With happy heart,
Of life a part,
His kindly spirit flows.

Around his knee
His family
Of bright-eyed girls and boys,
Content with simple joys,
Makes of his life
A happy strife,
His weariness alloys.

The evening glows;
The shadow grows
From every bush and tree;
O'er all the silent lea
No song is heard
From warbling bird,
That cheered the world and me.

And soon the breeze
Shakes in the trees,
And cooling is the draft;
Afar the light winds waft

The torrid heat,
That in the street
The straggling waters quaft.

The maiden moon,
That very soon
Through cloud racks makes her way,
'Mid brilliant suitors gay,
With modest light
Illumes the night,
And spreads her magic sway.

And through the night,
In garments white,
O'er mountain, field and glen,
The haunt and home of men,
Her watch she keeps,
And silent creeps,
Till dawn appears again.

Again the toil,
Again the broil
Through glowing heat of sun;
'Tis thus our lives are run;
By toil and strife,
Through constant life
A peaceful close is won.

In life's decline,
May peace be mine

From this tumultuous sea,
As scatters o'er the lea
The tranquil light
At drawing night,
And calm serenity.

